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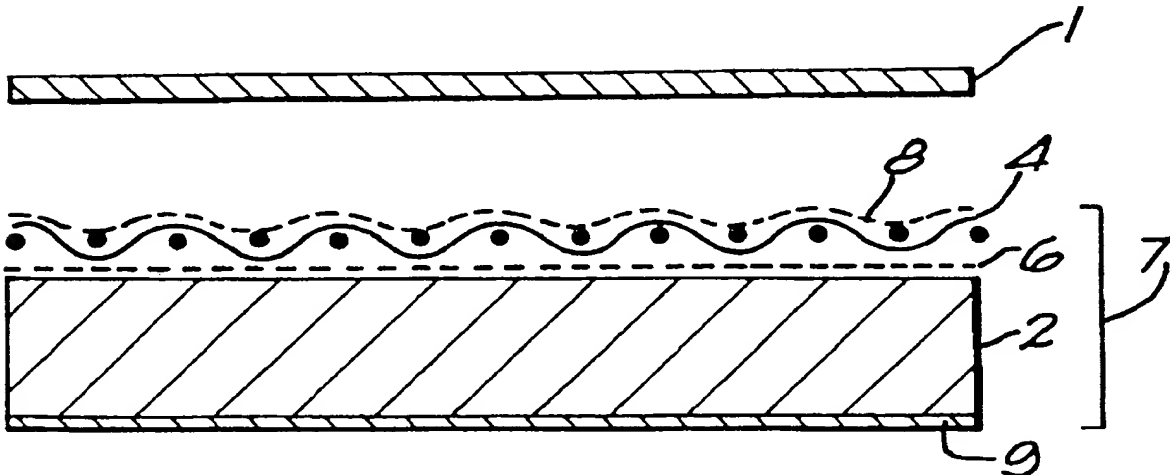
INT CL⁵ B44C 5/02 , B44F 11/02

ONLINE DATABASES: WPI

(54) Photograph mount

(57) A mount (7) is prepared from a backing layer (2), a canvas layer (4) and an exposed layer (8) of adhesive. The mount (7) is mass-produced in a factory and is then sent to a customer who laminates a photograph (1) to the mount (7) by applying pressure and heat in order to activate the adhesive of the layer (8). As a result, a canvas-like texture is imparted to the photograph (1). The mount (7) may be mass-produced to a high standard under factory conditions in order to remove the need for the customer to have to simultaneously prepare all of the layers at the time of mounting the photograph (1).

FIG. 2



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FIG. 1

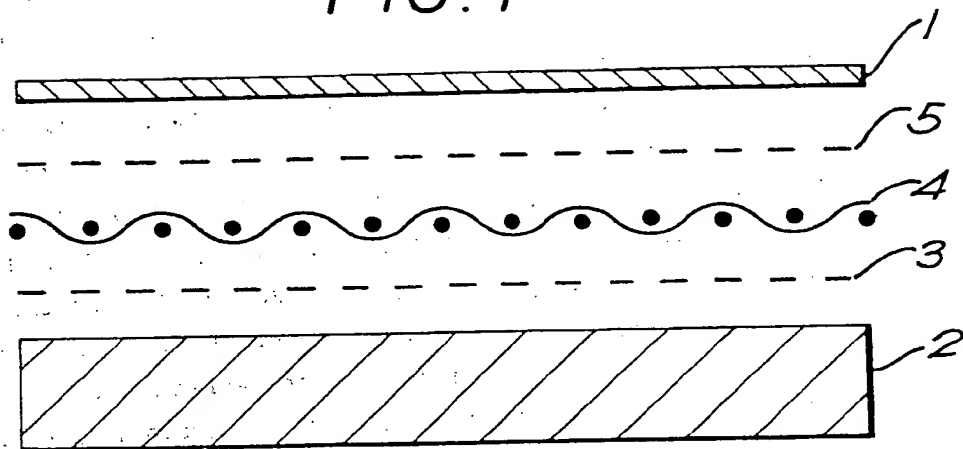
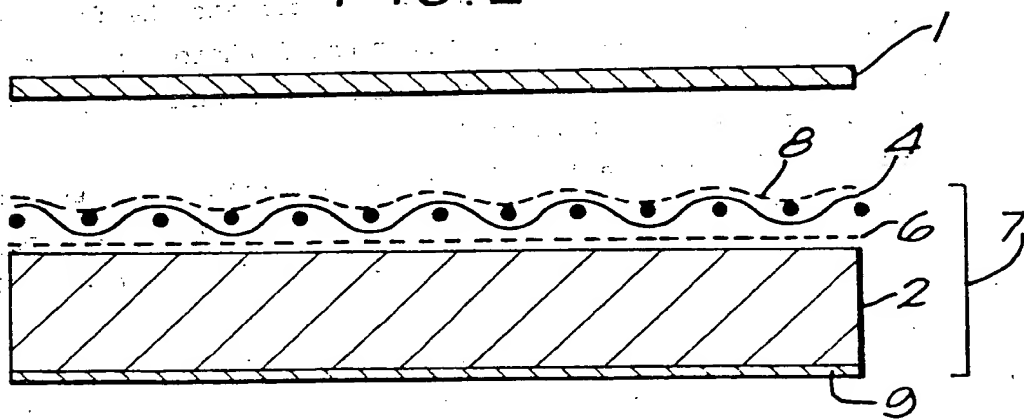


FIG. 2



PHOTOGRAPH MOUNT

The invention relates to a mount which may subsequently be used for mounting a photograph or the like.

A known mounting system is illustrated in Fig. 1 which is a diagrammatic exploded cross-sectional view. The system has been used for many years in order to impart a canvas effect to a photograph 1. The photograph, as mounted, actually comprises a top layer 1 of the photograph. The top layer 1 comprises a polythene coating onto which the photographic emulsion is coated and which is peeled away from a paper backing layer. The peeling away may be accomplished by bonding an adhesive film to the top layer and peeling away the combined top layer and adhesive film. The photograph top layer 1 (possibly with the adhesive film) may be considered to be a photograph in its own right and will hereinafter be referred to as such.

A sandwich of layers is formed as shown in Fig. 1. The individual layers are placed in position at the time of mounting the photograph 1. Starting from the bottom, there is a cardboard backing layer 2, a film 3 of hot-melt glue, a canvas layer 4, a film 5 of hot-melt glue and the photograph 1. The sandwich of components 1 to 5 is then compressed and laminated together whilst applying heat in order to activate the films 3, 5 of hot-melt glue. The resulting mounted photograph has a canvas-effect by virtue of the texture imparted to the photograph 1 by the canvas layer 4.

Because the prior-art technique is a one-step process in which all of the layers 1 to 5 are assembled at the same time, the mounting technique has proved to be relatively complex and costly.

According to a first aspect of the present invention, there is provided a mount for subsequent use in mounting a photograph, comprising: a backing having a non-smooth, textured surface; and adhesive disposed on the non-smooth, textured surface.

According to a second aspect of the present invention, there is provided a mount for a photograph, comprising: a backing having a non-smooth, textured surface; and adhesive disposed on the non-smooth, textured surface; wherein the photograph is not mounted on the non-smooth, textured surface.

With the present invention, the mounting process is split into a two-stage process. Firstly, the mount may be economically mass-produced in a factory under controlled conditions which ensure uniform quality. Large sheets of the mount may be produced and cut to standard sizes or supplied as large sheets to the customer. The customer is usually a photographic laboratory. The customer merely has to perform the simple task of positioning a photograph on the mount and using the adhesive of the mount to laminate the photograph to the mount. Usually, this will be achieved by mechanically pressing the photograph to the mount and applying heat. The non-smooth texture of the mount is then imparted to the photograph. Instead of using a mechanical press, a vacuum press may be used.

The mount may be used to mount a photograph, a poster or any similar thin sheet-like object which is capable of receiving a textured imprint, but the mount is particularly suited for use in relation to photographs.

Usually, the non-smooth textured surface will be a canvas-effect surface. Whilst the backing may be a one-piece backing, e.g. a plastics sheet moulded to have a non-smooth, textured surface, it is preferable that the backing comprises a base layer (e.g. a layer of cardboard) having a separate non-smooth, textured layer (e.g. a canvas-like layer) mounted thereon. The textured layer may be glued to the base layer, with the glue being different to the adhesive which is subsequently used to laminate the photograph to the mount.

Suitable examples of heat-activatable adhesives are hot-melt adhesives based on EVA polymers.

According to a third aspect of the present invention, there is provided a method of manufacturing a mount for subsequent use in mounting a photograph, comprising applying adhesive to a non-smooth, textured surface of a backing.

According to a fourth aspect of the present invention, there is provided a method of mounting a photograph or the like, comprising manufacturing a mount by using the method in accordance with the third aspect of the present invention, and subsequently using the adhesive of the mount to laminate the photograph or the like to the backing.

A non-limiting embodiment of the present invention will now be described with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which:-

Fig. 1 is a diagrammatic exploded cross-sectional view of a prior art mounting technique; and

Fig. 2 is a diagrammatic exploded cross-sectional view of the mounting technique of the present invention.

In Fig. 2, components which are common with Fig. 1 are identified with the same reference numerals. Under factory conditions, the cardboard backing layer 2 has a film 6 of cold-setting adhesive applied thereto in order to laminate the canvas layer 4 to the cardboard backing layer 2. Both faces of the cardboard backing layer 2 are smooth and it is the canvas layer 4 which imparts the required non-smooth, textured surface to the mount 7.

The mount 7 also includes a layer 8 of heat-activatable adhesive which is applied as a coating to the exposed surface of the canvas layer 4. Thus, it may be seen that the mount 7 as sold to the customer has an exposed adhesive coating in the form of the layer 8 of heat-activatable adhesive.

Optionally, the mount 7 may also include a protective paper backing layer 9 which stabilizes the other layers of the mount by reducing curl and distortion under adverse atmospheric conditions such as high humidity. In particular, the paper layer 9 expands and contracts in a similar fashion to the canvas layer 4, thereby maintaining the stability of the structure of the mount 7.

The mount 7 may be manufactured with all of the layers 2, 4, 6, 8, 9 being assembled simultaneously. Alternatively, the cardboard backing layer 2 may firstly be laminated to the canvas layer 4 by using the cold-setting adhesive layer 6. After this first step, a second step is performed of coating the canvas layer 4 with the layer 8 of heat-activatable adhesive.

The mount 7 may be produced as large sheets or else cut to standard sizes. The mount 7 is then transported from the factory to the location of the customer such as a photographic laboratory. The customer simply positions the photograph 1 on top of the exposed layer 8 of heat-activatable adhesive. Pressure and heat are then applied in order to laminate the photograph 1 to the mount 7 by activating the heat-activatable adhesive. This imparts the canvas texture of the canvas layer 4 to the photograph 1.

In an alternative embodiment, the heat-activatable adhesive of the layer 8 may replace the cold-setting adhesive of the layer 6. Under such circumstances, the canvas layer 4 may be impregnated with the heat-activatable adhesive and laminated to the cardboard backing layer 2 in a single-stage operation in order to produce the mount 7.

If the customer is not going to use heat to laminate the mount 7 to the photograph 1, an alternative to the heat-activatable adhesive may be used. The general characteristics required of the adhesive of the layer 8 are:

- (i) that the adhesive must form a good bond between the mount and the photograph;
- (ii) that the adhesive should not detract from the visual appearance of the photograph by showing through or by chemically or physically discolouring the photograph; and
- (iii) that the adhesive must bond to the rest of the mount and to the photograph without causing distortion.

CLAIMS

1. A mount for subsequent use in mounting a photograph, comprising:
a backing having a non-smooth, textured surface; and
adhesive disposed on the non-smooth, textured surface.
2. A mount for a photograph, comprising:
a backing having a non-smooth, textured surface; and
adhesive disposed on the non-smooth, textured surface;
wherein the photograph is not mounted on the non-smooth, textured surface.
3. A mount according to claim 1 or 2, wherein the non-smooth, textured surface is a canvas-effect surface.
4. A mount according to any of claims 1 to 3, wherein the backing comprises a base layer having a non-smooth, textured layer mounted thereon.
5. A mount according to claims 3 and 4, wherein the textured layer is a canvas-like layer.
6. A mount according to claim 5, wherein the canvas-like layer is made of woven fabric.
7. A mount according to any of claims 4 to 6, wherein the base layer is made of cardboard.
8. A mount according to any of claims 4 to 7, wherein the textured layer is glued to the base layer.

9. A mount according to any of claims 1 to 8, wherein the adhesive is a heat-activatable adhesive.
10. A mount according to claim 9, wherein the heat-activatable adhesive is a hot-melt adhesive based on EVA polymer(s).
11. A method of manufacturing a mount for subsequent use in mounting a photograph, comprising applying adhesive to a non-smooth, textured surface of a backing.
12. A method according to claim 11, wherein the non-smooth, textured surface is a canvas-effect surface.
13. A method according to claim 11 or 12, further comprising laminating a non-smooth, textured layer to a base layer to produce the backing.
14. A method according to claims 12 and 13, wherein the textured layer is a canvas-like layer.
15. A method according to claim 14, wherein the canvas-like layer is made of woven fabric.
16. A method according to any of claims 13 to 15, wherein the base layer is made of cardboard.
17. A method according to any of claims 13 to 16, wherein a glue is used to laminate the textured layer to the base layer.
18. A method according to claim 17, wherein the glue is different to the adhesive.

19. A method according to any of claims 13 to 18, wherein the adhesive is applied to the textured layer after the textured layer has been laminated to the base layer.

20. A method according to any of claims 11 to 19, wherein the adhesive is a heat-activatable adhesive.

21. A method according to claim 20, wherein the heat-activatable adhesive is a hot-melt adhesive based on EVA polymer(s).

22. A method of mounting a photograph or the like, comprising manufacturing a mount by using the method of any of claims 11 to 21, and subsequently using the adhesive of the mount to laminate the photograph or the like to the backing.

23. A mount for subsequent use in mounting a photograph, substantially as herein described with reference to Figure 2 of the accompanying drawings.

24. A method of mounting a photograph, substantially as herein described with reference to Figure 2 of the accompanying drawings.

Patents Act 1977
Examiner's report to the Comptroller under Section 17
(The Search report)

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 GB 9401651.6

Relevant Technical Fields

Search Examiner
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Date of completion of Search
 9 MARCH 1994

Databases (see below)

(i) UK Patent Office collections of GB, EP, WO and US patent specifications.

Documents considered relevant following a search in respect of Claims :-
 1-24

(ii) ONLINE DATABASES: WPI

Categories of documents

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| <p>X: Document indicating lack of novelty or of inventive step.</p> <p>Y: Document indicating lack of inventive step if combined with one or more other documents of the same category</p> <p>A: Document indicating technological background and/or state of the art.</p> | <p>P: Document published on or after the declared priority date but before the filing date of the present application.</p> <p>E: Patent document published on or after, but with priority date earlier than, the filing date of the present application.</p> <p>&: Member of the same patent family, corresponding document</p> |
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Category	Identity of document and relevant passages	Relevant to claim(s)
X	GB 1559650 (DELMORE) see eg page 2, lines 21-24 and 56-60	1-3,9,11, 12,20 and 22 at least
X	US 4528233 (FREE) see eg column 2, lines 11-13 and column 4, lines 7-12	1-3,9,11,12, 20 and 22 at least
X	US 3964946 (FALK) see eg column 2, lines 23-29 and 38-42	1-5,8,11-14, 17 and 22 at least

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